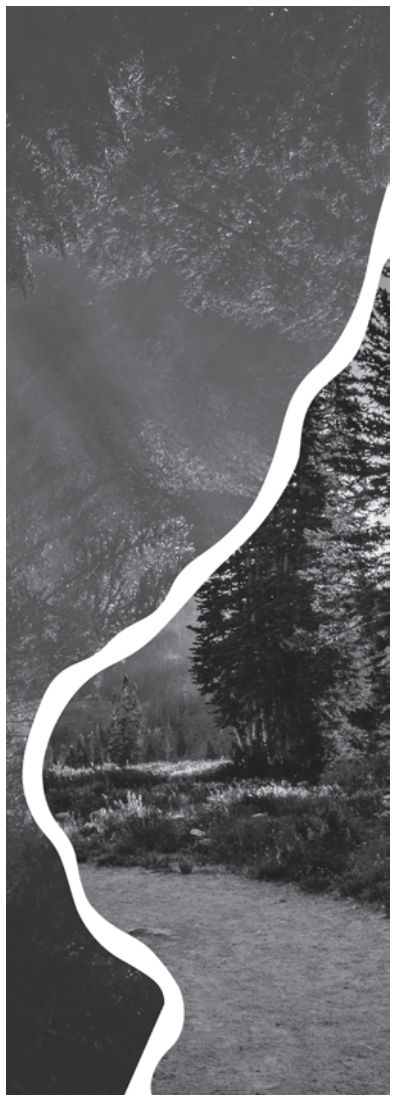
*Blue Hour*



# VII

At the edge of the town, there is a pile of bodies and a few mossy stones and a pool of blood reflecting the vibrant pink and orange clouds in the sunset. There are black rocks and hardened roots and soft mud and tree stumps and broken bones and leaves that are turning bright orange and a street leading into the town. A pile of bones. At this very moment, there are cities that sprawl out across the valley and throughout the soft forest. There is a cool wind a mile above us in the air. Orange and pink clouds spread out across the sky. Below the city, there is a deep hollow in the earth. A single street divides into a dozen branching pathways. There are no shapes here other than the glass and the buildings and a few trees with leaves falling slowly to the ground. Everything here in the city can break apart and come back together again. Somewhere deep in the city there is a soft, dark place. A hundred feet up in the air, there are clouds that turn orange and pink in the setting sun. Sometimes right angles run parallel to the river. Sometimes right angles cut right through the forest. Sometimes the fall cuts through the city. Sometimes the water is diverted around the city. Some hundred feet in the air there is no danger; there are only the broken and the splintered clouds and the view of the open land sprawling with cities and lights and crumpled metal and drunken bodies. There are broken branches and broken bodies and the scent of roses and

a single tree in the park. There are cities and bodies and streets and lights from the glowing windows. From the street, the sun can be seen setting behind buildings. There is a street that cuts by the black rocks and the lake in the middle of the city. Somewhere out there is the scent of roses. Somewhere out there is another city, another river, another mouth, another street, another set of lights. The soft, silvery wind. The stench of the garbage in the sun. There is the taste of copper in the air. Somewhere out there is the open, sprawling land; somewhere out there is the open, sprawling city glittering with lights in the fall evening. Somewhere beyond the forest is a city and another city and a street connecting the two together. Somewhere in the forest there are glimpses of roses and rocks and shrubs and mountain ranges that disappear just as suddenly as they appear. Deep in the forest—among the black rocks and the broken tree branches and the soft, silvery wind and the chasms and the overflowing rivers and the mounds of black earth and the mossy rocks—there are countless little houses with bright lights and dozens of soft, delicate bodies. Somewhere there is a street and another street and an unbroken sheet of pavement covering over the surface of the earth. Beyond the city there are forests and straits and islets and streets and rocks and other cities and somewhere in the air is the scent of roses. Beyond the city there are deep, soft places. Beyond the city there are hollows and ravines and rushing rivers. The streets connect themselves to other streets, other roads, other pathways, other trails, other cities. The streets connect themselves to bodies and lights and bars and blood. In between the streets and the drunken bodies, there are sometimes glittering puddles of brown water that reflect the light of the stars.

There are sometimes great expanses of lights and buildings and pathways and construction and glassy, concrete towers and sweaty bodies. In the city, there are fractured streets. In the city, the street sometimes breaks apart again and again until there is barely a path connecting each apartment, each bar, each body. In some parts of the city, there are thousands of bodies. Bodies with eyes and bruises. Bodies with claws and wings. At this very moment, there are thousands of bodies on the streets, thousands of bodies under the autumn sun. At this very moment, there is a hollow space below the city. At this very moment, a few of the bodies in the streets are staring up at the sky that is filled with low-hanging pink and orange clouds that drift between the concrete buildings. On this street—the street that intersects endlessly with other streets—there are thousands of bodies. Above the bodies, there are lights. In the ditches between cities, there are crushed rocks and dead bodies and tall grass. Above this place, there is a deep hollow in the sky and there is the scent of roses in the air. Below this place, there is a deep hollow in the earth. In the city, there is firelight and jagged scars on burned bodies and the taste of copper in the air. In this city, the flesh will split open again and again. On this flesh, scars will form on top of scars. In this city, the bodies are ragged with scrapes and bruises and broken fingers and crushed wings. In this city, the bodies cut other bodies. The scent from the intertwining bodies floats up in the air. This city is full of drunken bodies and sharp knives. The open air, where it drifts past the bodies, is full of sounds and scents. Just above the city—just above the rooftops—there is an overlapping space of sounds and scents and colours. In the city, there are spaces for bodies with wings and scales and

antlers. In the city, there are hard, cold places made for bodies. There are slow, intermingling drifts of bodies that brush up against each other during the day. In the forest, there are still black rocks and logs and a river that cuts through the trees. Mounds of old bones and broken trees sinking into the earth. Dozens of little houses and a street that connects up with the town. A dozen voices out in the woods that are lost in the sound of the city. Dozens of inaudible voices coming from somewhere in the forest. There are moments when cool light stretches out across the horizon and fills up the streets. Somewhere above the light from the sun turns the clouds red and purple and orange. There is a warm light cutting across the concrete expanse of the city. There are bodies and cool light and broken flesh and grey clouds just covering the sun. There is a boiling anger here at the centre of the city. There is a fierceness on this street. On the street, these drunken bodies will never be missed. In the city, almost every body is easily forgotten. In the light from the streets, the bodies can appear for a second and then disappear again into the darkness. Every twenty-four hours, the street will disappear into darkness. The street stretches out endlessly from city to city. There are old, buried bones somewhere under the city. There are crushed rocks and garbage and tall grass in the ditches by the road. There is warm water in the city, but the lakes are growing cold. Even the shallowest parts of the lakes are beginning to turn icy. The street stretches out horizontally until the edges touch the furthest buildings and the cool light pierces the morning like a sharp knife at the throat. In this ditch, there are piles of bone that clump together and the sweet smell of fruit wafting up into the air, swept up from the cool breeze of the

afternoon. In the short distance between the city and the forest, there is a ditch. There are broken bones and deep shadows and dead leaves in the ditch. There is a bright light cutting through the trees and into the city. A cool wind rushes between the buildings. The vibrant green forest as seen through the windows of the city. The sharp reflections visible for just a second in the clean blue glass. The streets and the bodies and the cool light and the falling leaves. This city is full of flesh that has been cut, limbs that have been severed, blood that has spilled. There are pools of blood that appear throughout the streets. This city is full of bodies and bones and crushed rocks and trees and broken branches and dead leaves and soft, silvery wind. Gliding above somewhere up in the cool light is the scent of roses. There is the sound of wind whistling between buildings. Throughout the afternoon, there is a deep silence. At some point, the fallen leaves swirl around the deep, dark centre of the city. At this moment, the cool air hangs just above the pile of bones in the ditch. The city is full. There is a light from some other, warmer place. A bright light and a pile of bones in the ditch. A cool breeze. The taste of copper in the air. At another moment, these streets would be sweltering. There would be a cool spring rain falling softly over the pile of bones. At this very moment, the cool light from the sun touches the pile of bones in the streets and in the ditches and there is silence. There is a soft, silvery wind that drifts through the city. There are tall buildings and polished windows and concrete rooftops. There is hard concrete and swirling leaves and a pile of bones. There is a stillness here on the edge of the city. There is a crack of blue lightning and then there is the sound of thunder. There are echoes that rush through

the street until they disappear. A mile in the air above us, there is a tumbling. A mile above us seems like some other, softer, colder place. Tomorrow, the pools of blood in the street will reflect the light of the sun. Tomorrow, a light will shine down onto the city, onto the pile of bones. Tomorrow, there will be a bright, cool light from somewhere other than here. Some seasons seem to last forever. Some streets reach out to touch the dead. Some streets carry us to some other, softer place. Some heat fills us with hope. Some cities last forever. Somewhere up in the darkness there is the scent of roses and soft water falling from the sky. Somewhere in the darkness above the city there is a soft, silvery wind and black clouds. Some flames flicker out in the lightest breeze. Some flames die out. Somewhere in the dying heat. Somewhere in the streetlights. Somewhere in the pile of bones. Somewhere in the still water. Somewhere in the velocity of the uproar. There is the scent of fruit that drifts through the street. The city and the bodies and the street and the gully and the soft, dark places of the forest and the expanding waters and the pools of blood and the shore and the moonlight and the black clouds and the black roots and the severed limbs and the soft, silvery wind and the rocks between the mounds of earth and the glittering stars and the open air floating over the forest and the valley and the stream and concrete towers and the clear sheets of water and the branching pathways and the dead leaves and the streetlights and nearly everything in between. The days stretch out until they disappear. After tomorrow. After the shadows. After the darkness directly in the sky above us. After all the sun and the rain and the waves of heat. After all the soft places of the city. After language has failed each and every body. After the darkness has

drifted between the bodies like a wave. After the flesh has split open. After the rooftops have collapsed under the weight of rain. After the windows have shattered. After the floorboards have split apart. When the bodies emerge from under broken wood and broken glass into the hard expanses of concrete. When the bodies emerge from crumpled metal and glassy towers. When the bodies finally come out into the streetlights at night. When there is a gentle, cool wind. When there is sunlight again in the city. When there is a break in the clouds. When the city is swept up in this sound of rain and thunder and wind. From somewhere deep in the city there are voices again. From somewhere deep in the city there are more soft bodies, more sharp objects, more breath in the air. As the air flows up from edges of the city, the sound of soft rain can be heard clearly. In the distance, there is the sound of thunder. The cool breeze and the bodies and the low bushes by the ditch and the noise of language in the air. The river flowing through the city. The bridge between the two sides of the city. Some trees in the park sway in the soft, silvery wind. Some language is just noise. Some flesh speaks to this particular place at this particular time. Some language has a word for this type of moment. At almost every moment of the day, the bodies move over the bridge that crosses the river. At almost every moment, the name of this city is on the tip of every tongue. For many moments, the name of the river hangs in the air. Every few yards, dead leaves from the trees float along the surface of the river. At the edge of the city, there is a dead silence and a broken street. Somewhere under the concrete rooftops there are bodies and there are voices taking up space. Somewhere under the concrete rooftops is the growing sound of voices. Somewhere on

this river dead leaves can be seen floating on the surface of the water. The water sinking downstream and under the buildings on the southern outskirts. On the edge of the city, there is a current of water that sinks down beneath the air. On the edge of the city, there is a river that winds around the broken rocks and the old, crooked roadways. Above the rooftops, bodies can be seen drifting back into town. There is movement; there is breath. In the city, the bodies fill up the air with voices. There are bodies drifting through the air, weaving their way past each other on the streets. The wind cuts through the city and across the bridge and into the ragged forest. The crooked teeth. The street. The air. The sparks. The flames. The smoke. The bodies with fingers and toes and broken antlers. A cool evening breeze sweeps around the bodies. Any breath. Any fire. Any thunder rumbling beyond the distant hills. Any surface. Any body. Any voice. Any flesh moving through the city. Moving between the buildings. Which bodies will find each other? Which bodies lead each other towards violence? Which voices can be trusted? Which cities have the right bodies? The right voices? Which voice sounds the sweetest? Which connections can be formed from these soft groupings of flesh? Which clusters of flesh will find their way onto the same street at the same time? Which street will stretch on without ending? Which cities will burn to the ground? The air sinks around the concrete rooftops at the edge of the city and the voices sink too. For a moment, the light shines through the glassy towers. For a few moments, there is a shaft of moonlight that cuts through the forest and into the river, illuminating a multitude of shifting whites and blues on the shallow surface. Somewhere in the trees there are bodies moving slowly.

There is a street that cuts through the trees and around the river. Behind the curvature of the street, there is a dark outline of a city and a soft, silvery wind. The open heavens and drifting vapours and broken treetops and sullen sounds and crushed rocks and evening atmosphere and blazing fire and deep laughter and roaring cavern and rushing water and impenetrable darkness and water glimmering in moonlight and hills and gloom and moving surfaces and bodies and quiet uneasiness and wooded outlines and silvery wind and broken branches and soft, dark places in the forest. In this gully, there is a darkness that can only be tasted. Another nation. Another lake. Another gully. Another cluster of bodies. Another fire. Another city. Another tree. Another voice. Another knot. Some say another street cuts through this forest. But which other street? Which other forest? Which other mouth? Which other body? Which other city? Which other country? Which other endless expanse of concrete? Which apartment on which block? Which soft expanse of sky? Which position of the dial? Which direction of the water? Which pause before speech? Some say that all the bodies can be counted. Some say there will always be another fire, another city. Black clouds drift above. The air is full of water. White lightning breaks the sky above us. A part of the city bursts into flames. There are naked bodies and glassy windows and blistering fire. There is breath and silence and fire. In the deepest parts of the city, there is another fire. At the edge of the city, there is a narrow, deep river that separates the city from the forest. Some day bodies will break these cities apart. In the west, there will be as many bodies as there are blades of grass in a park. In the street, bodies move like fire. On the broad side of the street, the air tastes like copper and the city is

full of bodies. Bodies and air and flesh and moonlight and breath and streetlights. Numberless bodies and songs and drunken voices. Tonight, the stars will shine. The streets will be overrun with bodies. The city and the streets and the concrete rooftops and the western horizon as seen through the glassy windows and the west will arrive. Above the concrete rooftops, the sky is bright and pink and delicate. Where are the deep shadows behind the short trees along the edge of the park? What sparks form out of the damp morning air? What country? What street? What moment? The river bends through the city. The streets are lit up at night. The sun sets in a flood. Tonight, coolness spreads through the city. From the bodies and the masses of concrete and the distant western hills and the spectacle of darkness and the pure exhalations of the night and the eastern shore and the mountains and silent moments and the shaggy outlines of the tall pines and nearly everything in between. From the city. From the darkness. From the broken masses of bodies. From the distant hills. From the flesh on the shores. From the southern end. From claw to thigh. From straight, endless streets. From the dizzying heights. From the narrow spaces between buildings. From voice. From paper. From the air pouring across the waste waters that spill out into the river beyond the city. From starlight. From rain. From earth. From broken rooftops and broken sky. From the bodies in the woods and the mossy rocks and the deep, narrow ravines. From the soft, dark places of the forest. From the blood spilling into the river in the park. From the tumbling in the air a mile above us. Below the high, concrete summits is an invisible wave drifting through the city. After all the streets cutting their way through the city. After all the bodies disappearing and

reappearing in parallel. After all the hills and the lakes and streets and concrete towers. After all the air that has held body after body. After all the air that has been moved from mouth to mouth. After all the cities. After all the swirling leaves in the air. The bodies in the cities will find their way into the soft, dark centre. From this spot, the bodies seem to be a part of the earth. There are miles and miles of streets stretching between cities. Miles and miles of cities that stretch out to touch each other, that are connected by streets and shallow ditches and drifting bodies. The bodies and the streets and the chasms and the ragged rooftops and the black waters and the shores and the horizon and the wet mud and the disappearing trees and the crushed rocks and the voices and the silence. For a few moments, the earth disappears under the bodies. There are streets and bones in the ditches. For a few moments, there is just the street. For a few moments, there is no forest, no lake, no bodies, no cities. Only darkness. For just a moment, everything disappears into the soft, dark places of the city. When the light reappears in the morning, there are pink and orange clouds in the sky. Beyond the city there are countless islands. Islands surrounded by other islands. Cliffs and forests and rivers and chasms and low bushes. Sometimes the waters rise. Sometimes the clouds spill out across the sky. Sometimes there is the taste of copper in the air. Sometimes there is white lightning in the sky a mile in the air above us. Sometimes there are bodies lost in the cities. Sometimes there is a fire in the sky. Somewhere deep in the city there is a dark pool of water at the edge of the street. There are slow waters. There is air that echoes through the streets and between the buildings and out the windows and down past the ditches and out over the stream and into the

trees just past the rocks and fissures and mounds of earth and little shrubs. Mouths move this air. If the air floating over the street is full of voices. If there are streets full of light. If there is room for breathing. If there are piles of bone. If the river in the city that cuts through the park is just a dream. If the bodies here are forever. If the streets sprawl out and intersect together. All the bodies here are broken. Somewhere in the evening light there is a cool wind. Bodies between buildings. Light cutting through the windows of the concrete towers. In the morning, other bodies will appear. For a moment, the moon is visible above the concrete rooftops and through the window. For a moment, the sound from the wind is the only thing that can be heard in the town. In the evening, there is the sound from the rushing wind that rises up through the trees and the shrubs and the broken rocks of the forest. Beyond these trees there is a bright, shiny day and there are bodies. There is a spark on the tip of every tongue. Beyond these trees there is a spark in the air. More dirt. More windows. More voices. Somewhere in the city the air swells. What bodies fill the air with language? What country spills out into the air? Somewhere in the city there are paintings of rocks and logs and immovable mountains and rotting chunks of driftwood and broken tree branches and clothed bodies and cold lakes and piles of bone and bright, silvery moons. What ideas grow out of this pile of bones? If the flesh remains soft and delicate. If the street is quiet. If there are streetlights shining down on the dirt and the streets. If there are voices that cut through the night. If the west is right now, then the bodies must appear in the streets at midnight and the flesh must break free. If the west is right now, it hangs in the air above this city. If the west is right now, it is drifting through

these soft bodies lurching in the streets. The west is just bodies. The west is just flesh. Bodies with fists and teeth and claws and eyes. For a few moments, the stars will light up a pathway that winds though the streets and out past the ditches and into another city. All bodies will disappear into the concrete towers. Low-hanging clouds can be seen floating between the buildings. There is another flame. There are numberless bodies and broken claws and rotting toes. Somewhere beyond the city there is a clear sheet of water and bald rocks just beneath the surface. In the houses, there are paintings of the water in the lakes and the rivers and the streams and the waterfalls. There are paintings of the water in the old towns and in the gutters and washing through the ditches and pooling at the edges of the streets. Sometimes bodies are pressed up against each other. Bodies within bodies. Bodies intertwining together. Bodies entangled in sweat and spit. In the ocean, there are waves within waves. The wind swirls dead leaves through the street. Smoke billows over rooftops. Black clouds. Swirling wind. In the far distance, there are dark clouds floating above a far-off city. Voices can be heard somewhere out there in the storm. For all the bodies in the ditches. For all the dark mounds of earth and black rocks and broken branches and intersecting lines of sight from the city. For all the right angles that run parallel to each other until there is a moment when they intersect. For all the wet, black branches. For all the broken rocks and immovable trees and deep, narrow ravines and soft, dark places. For every single body. For every black cloud that is pulled apart by rain. For every cheek pressed against the side of a concrete tower. Beneath the broken clouds is a steep, rugged trail leading down out of the forest. There

are no sounds anymore. In earlier seasons, waves of heat would drift through this place. There are pools of rainwater collecting at the bottom of buildings. Today, there is a cool autumn breeze. Today, the air is full of water and the taste of rotting fruit. Each body is softer than the last. Each body gushing with blood. Blood pooling in the streets. Blood disappearing in the rain. Blood and dirt and broken glass and rain. There are bodies here that have never left the warm, dark places of the city. Above the city, there is a soft, silvery wind and an expanding darkness. For a moment, the only light that remains is shining from the windows of houses. For a moment, the forest and the city are indistinguishable in the darkness. For a moment, nothing can be seen. At this very moment, there is a soft orange glow on the horizon, lighting up the forest and trees and the streets and the city. Cold dew has formed on this flesh in the morning. In the new morning light, the sick and broken bodies on the streets and in the ditches are lit up. For a moment, the flesh is remembered. Beyond the edges of the city there is the dark outline of the forest. There is a light mist in the orange sky. The mist drifts out over the city and between the trees lining the sides of the street. Between the trees and the broken branches, there are more broken bodies. If there is space here for voices, then they are quieter than before. If there is space for all these bodies, it is here in the city and on these streets. If there are spaces between the cities, they are filled with a soft morning light. Somewhere above there is a tumbling in the air a mile above us. Somewhere above there is a soft, silvery wind that disappears into the trees and cuts through the autumn air. Some stars can still be seen in the morning above the rooftops and through the windows. Somewhere above there is a

light from somewhere other than here. There is a bright, delicate light reflected in the pools of water at the edges of the streets. In the city, there are bodies crusted over with dirt and dried blood. There are bodies heaped with rags and frayed fabric. In the sky, there is the taste of blood and concrete and silence. Sometimes there is no way to tell where the scent of roses is coming from. Some clouds in the wind. Some streets. Some other city. Some crooked wilderness. Some overflowing ditch. An old patch of black earth from somewhere other than here. Dark earth somewhere under the streets. Somewhere deep under the city. In the puddles on the streets, concentric circles rippling outward. The water pooling in the ditches. Dead leaves in the gutter. A black cloud just above the rooftops. A soft wind cuts between the bodies. A cool breeze drifts through the streets. Where there is night, there is the cold dew of morning. Where there are knives, there are bodies. Where there is fire, there are bodies. Where there is smoke, there are bodies. There are slow, intermingling drifts of mist that rise up to the rooftops and disappear above the concrete towers. Just above the rooftops, there is a bright light that cuts into the city. Just above the expanse. Just above the clouds. Just between the glittering stars, there is an emptiness. Just above the bodies, there are clouds of breath. Just above the rooftops, there is the scent of roses and whiskey. Just above the rooftops, there is the old light from old stars piercing the morning. Just above the rooftops, there is an orange, delicate sky. Just above the rooftops, there is water hanging in the air. At this height, the shining sky is just a little closer. At this height, about a quarter mile from the edge of the city, the sun burns the tops of buildings. If there is a strong tunnel of wind that follows the

curvature of the ditches and glides through the city at a hundred miles an hour. If the winds are fiercer than before. If the bodies in the city are cleared away. If the thousands of glittering stars above are never quite visible in the light from the afternoon. If the darkness is just drifting above until the light fades away. If there is a knife pressing at the throat of each body in the city. If the street splinters into other streets. If there are dead, swirling leaves. If the blood sprays into the air. If there are voices. If there are trees lining the streets. If there are connecting lines. If a line is drawn in the wet concrete. If there are lines connecting the concrete towers. If there are no more hills or banks or caverns or ravines or steep, rugged ascents. If there is just flesh in the city and on the streets. If the lake in the park sometimes shines in the light from the city. If there is ever truly a moment of darkness again. If the bones sink into the muddy ditches. If there is the taste of blood in the air. If there are moments that lead us away from the centre of the city. If the smoke consumes the forest and the streets and the city. If the city is just a point in space. If the south seems like a dream. If the bodies hang in the trees just past the outskirts. If the broken line comes together again. If the light between the buildings is just moonlight. If the city disappears into the rain. If the woods have disappeared. If there are blue lights from the city and cold rain and black rocks in the park. If there are streets that lead us into more darkness. If there is the promise of a cold winter. If there are broken sheets of rain cutting through the night. If there is sickness. If there is fear. If the blood runs like a river through the streets. If flesh is peeled from the bone. If slow, intermingling drifts of sounds and scents float through the air. If the moon reflects the light from the sun. If there

are bodies and cities and broken land and hunger and fire and windows that look out onto the cracked asphalt of the streets. If there is a country. If there is a nation. If there is a fierce wind pushing through the cracks in the concrete. If some other, softer place is not softer at all. If blood gushes from every body. If the rain never clears. If there is a tumbling in the air above us in the city. If the bodies are drained of blood. If the flesh rots from the inside out. If there are black expanses of streets between the houses. If there are bodies in the streets. Bodies in the darkness. Bodies seen through the swirling leaves in the wind. In the fall, there are bodies within bodies in the cool night. In the fall, the bones will disappear into the ditches. Some flesh will sink into the black earth beneath the city. Some flesh remembers the contours of the city. Some flesh disappears. Some flesh carries the lingering scent of roses. Some waters dry up. Some mountain waters disappear into the earth. Somewhere out there bodies are hollowing out the earth from underneath the street. Somewhere in the wind bodies are wiping the sweat away from their eyes. Somewhere in the city there are voices crying out. There will always be broken bones. There will always be long, straight lines between the cities. There will always be broken bodies and black streets and splintered bones in the ditches. There will always be voices. There will always be words. There will always be some idea of a country. There will always be another day. There will always be a line in the dirt. Tomorrow might arrive in the next few minutes. Tomorrow blossoms in every moment. Tomorrow, there will be bodies entangled in spit and sweat. Tomorrow is a circle. To see the blood in the river that runs through the park. To see the blood that runs down the gutter and

along the street. To see the dead leaves swirling in the wind throughout the city. To see the broken bodies and the broken bones. To see the open square and the pile of bones in the soft autumn light. To see the skulls in the ditch. To see the plated gold. To see the line that connects the claws to the heart to the toes to the street to the city. To see the line that connects the stars to the skin. To see the line that connects the eyes to the knife. Tonight, we will see the line that connects the bodies to the street. Tonight, the light from the stars will break through the black clouds. The stars will puncture the darkness. Scars will thicken on the backs of hands. Bones will break. There are falling sheets of rain from somewhere above in the black clouds. There are clouds of breath in the streets. There are voices and there is blue light from the concrete towers. There is light from the windows. There are dark clouds. There is heavy rain. There is a heavy rain pouring down onto the bodies in the streets. There are black clouds and blue light from the windows and heavy rain and somewhere below the concrete towers there are bodies colliding into each other on the streets.

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# VIII

There are black clouds and blue light from the windows and heavy rain and somewhere below the concrete towers there are bodies colliding into each other on the streets. There is a heavy rain pouring down onto the bodies in the streets. Heavy rain that slowly turns to ice. Thick grey clouds. Warm light from the windows. There is heavy sleet outside and there are warm, blue lights from the concrete towers. There are clouds of icy breath in the streets. Falling sheets of sleet from somewhere above in the thick grey clouds. In this city, fingers will break, hands will scar. In this city, toes will turn black and eventually fall off. Bones will splinter. Scars will thicken on the backs of hands. Tonight, the stars will puncture the darkness. Tonight, the light from the stars will break through the thick grey clouds. Tonight, we will see the line that connects the bodies to the street. To see the line that connects the eyes to the knife. To see the line that connects the stars to the skin. To see the line that connects the eye to the heart to the knife to the antlers to the wings. To see the plated gold teeth. To see the skulls in the snowy ditch. To see the pile of bones in the heavy sleet. Broken bodies; broken bones. To see the snow swirling in the tunnels of wind between the buildings. To see the ice in the river that runs through the park. Tomorrow is a dream. Tomorrow is a line that cuts endlessly through the city. Tomorrow is a circle. Tomorrow

blossoms in all the entangled bodies. There will always be a line in the snow. There will always be another day. There will always be some idea of a country. There will always be words. There will always be voices. There will always be broken bodies and black streets and splintered bones in the snowy ditches. There will always be long, straight lines between the cities. There will always be broken bones. Somewhere in the city there are voices crying out. Somewhere in the swirling snow bodies are wiping the ice away from their eyes. Somewhere out there bodies are hollowing out the earth from underneath the street. Some frozen waters disappear into the earth. Some waters disappear under the snow. Some flesh carries the lingering scent of roses. Some flesh disappears. Some flesh remembers the contours of the city. Some flesh will disappear into the frozen earth beneath the city. In the winter, the bones will disappear under the snow. In the winter, there are bodies within bodies in the freezing night. Entangled bodies on the soft carpet. Bodies seen through the swirling snow in the wind. Bodies in the darkness. If there are bodies in the freezing streets. If there are endlessly expanding streets underneath the snow. If the flesh freezes from the inside out. If the bodies are drained of blood. If there is a tumbling in the air above us in the city. If the snow never clears. If blood gushes from every body. If some other, softer place is not softer at all. If there is a cold wind whistling through the cracks in the concrete. If there is a nation. If there is a country. If there are bodies and glassy towers in the cities. If there is broken land and hunger and warm fireplaces and windows that look out onto the cracked, snowy asphalt in the streets. If the moon is reflected in the glassy windows of the concrete towers. If slow, intermingling drifts

of snow float through the air between the buildings. If flesh is peeled from the bone beneath fluorescent lights. If the blood pools beneath apartment doors. If there is fear. If there is sickness. If there are broken bodies running through the swirling snow. If there is the distant promise of spring. If there are snowy streets that lead us into more darkness. If there are blue lights from the windows and swirling snow and black rocks in the park and warm, sweaty bodies in the apartment blocks. If the woods have disappeared somewhere under all this snow. If the bodies have disappeared somewhere into all these apartments. If the city is just a series of lights. If the broken line comes together again. If the bodies disappear in the sleet. If snow drifts through the forest and the streets and the city. If there are moments that lead us away from the city. If there is the taste of blood in the air. If the bones in the forest are forgotten. If there is ever truly a moment of silence again. If the icy lake in the park sometimes shines in the light from the city. If there are lines connecting the concrete towers. If a line is drawn in the snow on the sidewalk. If there are lines connecting the apartments to the sidewalk to the wristwatches. If there are barren trees lining the snowy streets. If there are voices. If the blood sprays into the air. If there is swirling, white snow in the streets. If the street turns into another street. If there is the taste of copper in the air. If there is a knife pressing at the throat of each body in the city. If the bodies here in this city are forever. If the bones in the ditches can't quite be seen under the snow. If the darkness is just drifting above until the light fades away. If the thousands of glittering stars above are never quite visible in the sky anymore. If the bodies in the city are cleared away. If there is the taste of smoke in the city. If

there is a tunnel of wind that follows the curvature of the ditches and glides through the city at ninety miles an hour. At this height, about a quarter mile from the edge of the city, the snow drifts over the tops of buildings. There is flesh and there are fluorescent lights and there are moments when they seem to intertwine and exist together as one. There are bodies that trudge slowly through the snowy streets. Just above the city, there is a bright light that shines down on the street and out of the city. Just above the rooftops, there is snow hanging in the air. Just above the rooftops, there is a pink, delicate sky. Just above the rooftops, there is old light from old stars piercing the morning. Just above the bodies, there are clouds of icy breath. Just between the glittering stars, there is an emptiness. Just above the clouds. Just above the expanse. Just above the rooftops, there is a bright light that cuts into the city. There are slow, intermingling drifts of snow that rise up to the rooftops and disappear into the sky above the concrete towers. Where there is smoke, there are bodies. Where there is fire, there are bodies. Where there are knives, there are bodies. Where there is night. Where there is snow. Where there are bodies drifting from apartment to apartment. Snow drifts through the streets and up through the city. A cold wind cuts between the bodies. A grey cloud just above the rooftops. Splintered bones in the frozen earth below the city. Ice in the ditches. Broken bodies in the streets. Somewhere deep under the city. Somewhere deep under the highways. Some other, softer place. Some apartment. Some driveway. Some stretch of highway. Some overheated car. Some overflowing ditch. Some icy breath. Some crooked wilderness. Some foggy windows. Some itchy carpets. Some mad dash between buildings. Somewhere along the

street. Some soft whisper from somewhere other than here. There is blood and snow and concrete. In the sky above. In the sky above the city, there is the taste of copper in the air. In the snow, there are bodies heaped with rags and frayed fabric. In the city, there are bodies crusted over with frozen mud. There is a bright, delicate light reflected in the ice at the edges of the streets. Somewhere above there is a light from somewhere other than here. Some stars can still be seen in the morning above the rooftops and through the windows. Somewhere above there is a soft, silvery wind that disappears between the apartment blocks and cuts above the snowy streets. If there are empty spaces between the cities, they are filled with a soft, swirling snow. If there is space for all these bodies, it is here in the city and in these concrete towers. If there is space here for voices, then they are quieter than before. Between the apartments and the broken asphalt, there are more broken bodies. The snow drifts out over the city and between the trees lining the sides of the street. There are small grey clouds in the orange sky above. At the limits of the city, there is the ragged, snowy outline of the forest. For a moment, the flesh is remembered. In the winter light, the sick and broken bodies on the street are lit up. Ice has formed on this flesh in the morning light. At this very moment, there is a soft orange glow on the horizon, lighting up the concrete towers and the streets and the city and the edge of the forest. Bodies on the snowy street and in the apartment blocks and on the highways and at the limits of the city and on the frozen sidewalks. For a moment, the sun lights up the city. For a moment, nothing can be seen in the blinding light that reflects off the snow and from the windows and off the ice in the streets. For a moment, the light

seems to touch everything. For a moment, the city disappears in the light. Above the city, there is a soft, silvery wind and an expanding light. In the city, the bodies will disappear into warm, carpeted places at night. There are bodies here that have never left the city. Blood and dirt and broken glass and snow. Blood disappearing into the snow. Blood gushing from soft, delicate bodies. Each body softer than the last. Today, the air is full of snow and the taste of rotting fruit. Today, there is a tunnel of winter wind between the buildings in the city. Today, the blood sinks into the snow in the streets. There are little frozen pools of ice at the dark edges of the buildings. In earlier seasons, waves of heat would drift through this city by the woods overlooking the deep stillness of the forest. But in this season, there is just blood and dirt and swirling snow and soft, delicate bodies in the streets. Today, there is no flesh other than this flesh. There are no bodies other than these bodies. There is no city other than this city. Beneath the broken clouds is a steep set of stairs leading down to the city centre. Beneath the broken clouds, there are bodies descending the icy steps. Some cheeks are pressed against warm carpets in the apartment blocks. Some cheeks are freezing in the winds outside. For every drop of blood. For every cheek pressed against the side of a concrete tower. For every finger. For every toe. For every claw and beak and tongue. For every broken body. For every grey cloud that is pulled apart by snow. For all the frozen branches. For all the right angles that run parallel to each other until there is a moment when they intersect. For all the dark mounds of frozen earth and black rocks in the park. For all the broken branches and intersecting lines of sight from the city. For all the bodies in the ditches. Voices can be heard somewhere

out there in the storm. In the far distance, there are dark clouds floating above a far-off city. All the swirling snow. All the black clouds. In the far distance, there is another city, another body gushing blood in the snow, another cluster of windows. Here, there are bodies and swirling snow and warm apartment blocks. There are glimpses of grey smoke billowing over the rooftops in the distance. In another city, there is just the sound of snow swirling in the street. In another city, there are bodies in the streets. In the ocean, there are waves within waves. In the city, there is laughter and grilled flesh and a cold winter wind. In another city, there is a raging fire and burning flesh. Sometimes there is so much noise. Sometimes there are so many voices. There are piles of bodies. Bodies entangled under the snow. Bodies frozen together with blood. Sometimes there is a moment when flesh is pressed up against other flesh. In the apartment blocks, there are paintings of waterfalls and old towns and clothed bodies and empty streets and smoke curling above a forest. In the houses, there are paintings of the water in the lakes and the rivers and the streams and the waterfalls. Sometimes paintings break apart. Somewhere out there above the street there is a tumbling in the air a mile above us. Somewhere out there beyond the city there is a clear sheet of ice and bald rocks just beneath the surface. This morning, there are just memories of fire. Memories of summer. Numberless bodies and broken limbs and crushed wings. This morning, there is another flame. Low-hanging clouds floating between the buildings; bodies drifting through the snow. For a few moments, the stars will light up a pathway that winds though the snowy streets and out past the ditches and into another city. If the west is to be made, then this

flesh will make it. There are bodies that have voices that intersect with each other and cut through the winter night. There are bodies that have voices and fists and blood. The west is just flesh. The west is just bodies with knives. If streetlights shine down on the snow and the bodies. If the street is quiet. What kind of city grows from this old pile of bones? What kind of city gushes with blood? What bodies fill the air with language? What country spills out into the air? What nation cuts through the tall buildings? What old bones can stand this swirling snow? Somewhere in the city there are paintings of rocks and logs and immovable mountains and rotting chunks of driftwood and broken tree branches and naked bodies and cold lakes and piles of bone and bright, silvery moons. Somewhere in the city the air swells and windows break and soft voices spill out into the night. In the evening, there is the sound from the rushing wind that rises up through the trees and the shrubs and the broken rocks in the park. For a moment, the sound from the wind is the only thing that can be heard. For a moment, the moon is visible above the concrete rooftops and through the window. In the morning, bodies will surround the city. Bodies between the buildings and in the street. Bodies in the evening light. If the intermingling drifts of air above stretch out above the city to intersect with other currents of air. If the frozen river in the city that cuts through the park is just a dream. If the trees. If the rocks. If the soft, silvery wind. If the bodies. If the streets. If the air floats over the lake and the city. If there is scattered light from the clouds above. If there is the taste of copper in the air. If there are heaps of bone being forgotten under the snow. If there are streets full of light that run from city to city. If the frozen air floating over the street is full

of voices. If there is a sound that echoes through the streets and between the buildings and out the windows and down past the ditches and out over the frozen stream and into the trees just past the rocks and fissures and mounds of snow and little shrubs and tree stumps and broken bones and broken teeth. There are slow bodies in the city. Somewhere deep under the city there is a chasm and a dark pool of clear water. Somewhere deep under the city there is a rocky chasm that leads down into some other, darker place. Sometimes there is bright blue light in the air. Sometimes the ice rises. At the city limits, there are stretches of asphalt and forests and highways and rivers and cars and chasms and broken bodies and low bushes and the scent of whiskey in the air. At the city limits, there are sometimes stretches of water that lead out to islands that are surrounded by other islands. When the light reappears in the morning, there are pink and orange clouds in the sky just above the city. For just a moment, all the soft, dark places of the city disappear. For just a moment, there is only bright yellow light. Old bones; frozen earth. Snow in the ditches. For a few moments, the earth disappears underneath the snow. Bodies and streets and rooftops and frozen waters and shores and concrete towers and crushed rocks at the side of the highway. Cities stretch out into each other. Miles and miles of streets. From this spot, these bodies seem to be a part of the earth. Cities drift into each other. Cities intertwine. After all the air passing from mouth to mouth. After all the hills and the streets and the lakes in the park and the concrete towers overlooking the trees. There is an invisible wave drifting through the city. Concrete towers. Narrow ravines. Apartment blocks. Snow falls through the broken skylight. Snow

falls onto the stacks of papers. Snow falls into the narrow spaces between tall buildings. There are endless streets between apartment blocks. Between the bodies and masses of concrete and the distant western hills and the spectacle of darkness and the pure exhalations of the night and the eastern shore and the apartment blocks and the mountains and the streets and the shaggy outlines of the tall pines and nearly everything else. A chill spreads through the city. The sky is orange and pink and purple in the sunset. The frozen river bends through the city. Above the concrete rooftops, the sky is bright and pink and delicate. Numberless bodies. Drunken voices. Flakes of snow in the air. Today, the bodies will break this city apart. In the deepest parts of the city, there is another fire. Breath and silence and fire. Naked bodies and glassy windows and blistering fire. When fire runs down the walls around us. When clouds of black smoke drift out of the windows. When the air is full. When bodies turn to ash. When the dead can be heard. When the flames spread from block to block. When there is a soft, silvery wind and snow falling from the sky. When the fire can be seen from miles away. The streets are full of burned and broken bodies. A soft expanse of sky. A tunnel of wind. A frozen current of water. A pause before speech. A pile of flesh at the limits of the city. A view from a concrete rooftop. Some say that all the bodies can be named. Another streetlight. Another drunken voice. Another fire. In this city, there is a darkness that exists only for a second. The open heavens and the drifting vapours and the concrete rooftops and the sullen sounds and the burned bodies and the blazing fire and the deep laughter and the bright lights and the roaring cavern and the rushing waters and the apartment blocks and the impenetrable

darkness and the frozen river glimmering in the moonlight and the streetlights and the stretches of asphalt and the hills and the gloom and the moving surfaces and the bodies and the quiet uneasiness and the wooded outlines and the soft, silvery wind and the broken branches and the soft, dark places of the city and the concrete towers and nearly all the bodies in between. There is a street that curves around the city. There is a dark outline of apartment blocks and concrete towers. There is a tunnel of silvery wind. There is a street that cuts through the trees and around the river. Somewhere in the trees there are bodies clinging to branches. A shaft of moonlight that cuts through the park and into the frozen river. Which light will stretch on without ending? Which cities will burn to the ground? The air sinks around the concrete rooftops at the edge of the city. Any movement in the streets. Any traffic between buildings. Any surface that can hold a body. The wind cuts through the city and across the bridge and into another city. There are bodies falling out of buildings. There are bodies weaving their way past each other on the streets. Bodies in the city that cut each other with knives in the snowy street. Bodies in the city that fill up all the air with the sound of language. Bodies entangled in heat and spit. Above the concrete rooftops, bodies can be seen drifting back into town. At the limits of the city, there is a river that winds around the broken rocks and the old crooked roadways. At the limits of the city, there is a frozen river that sinks down beneath the air. Somewhere on this frozen river burned bodies can be seen on the flat surface of the ice. Somewhere under the concrete rooftops is the growing sound of voices. At the limits of the city, there is a dead silence and heaps of garbage. Every few yards, snow covers over the

piles of dead leaves and garbage and tree branches. For many moments, the name of the river hangs in the air. The name of this city is on the tip of every tongue. Bodies move over the bridge that crosses the frozen river. There is a word for this type of moment. Trees sway in the soft, silvery wind. The bridge stretches between the two sides of the city. The icy river flowing through. The cold winter wind and the bodies and the low bushes by the ditch and the noise of language in the air. In the distance, there is swirling snow. As the air flows up from the limits of the city, the sound of bodies in the streets can clearly be heard. From somewhere deep in the city there are more soft bodies, more sharp objects, more swirling snow in the air. From somewhere deep in the city there are voices again. From somewhere at the limits of the city there is the sound of wind rushing through the broken windows of the apartment blocks. The cracked beams of wood. The broken concrete slabs. The swirling snow and the burned bodies. The city is swept up in the sounds of bodies burning and apartment blocks collapsing and snow falling softly to the streets. At the limits of the city, there is a break in the clouds. At the limits of the city, there is sunlight again. There is swirling snow in a tunnel of wind. There are bodies drifting back into the streetlights. When the bodies emerge from burned apartment blocks and the crumpled metal and the glassy, concrete towers. When the bodies emerge from under broken wood and broken glass and into the hard concrete expanses and soft, swirling snow. After the floorboards have split apart. After the windows have shattered. After the rooftops have collapsed under the weight of snow. After the walls have erupted in flames. After the flesh has split open. After the darkness has drifted between the bodies like a

wave. After language has failed each and every body. After all the soft places of the city have been filled with bodies. After all the swirling snow and freezing winds. After all the darkness directly in the sky above us. After all the shadows have branched into the darkest parts of the night. After tomorrow. After the days have stretched out until they disappear into the night. After all, the sun will be directly above us again. The city and the burned bodies and the street and the gully and the soft, dark places of the apartment blocks and the expanding waters and the pools of blood in the snow and the shore and the moonlight and the black clouds and the black roots and the severed limbs and the soft, silvery wind and the rocks between the mounds of earth and the glittering stars and the open air floating over the forest and the valley and the stream and concrete towers and the clear sheets of ice and the branching pathways and the streetlights and all the bodies in between. In the city, the blood disappears in the snowbanks. In the city, there are piles of old bones and heaps of garbage. There is the scent of rotting fruit that drifts through the street. Somewhere there is a critical velocity in the uproar of the highway. Somewhere there is a winding river of ice, a pool of blood under our seats in the car. An old pile of bones. A streetlight. Somewhere in the dying night. Some flames die out in the cold winds of winter. Some flames flicker out in the lightest breeze. Somewhere in the darkness above the city there is a soft, silvery wind and black clouds. Somewhere up in the darkness there is the scent of roses and soft snow falling from the sky. Some cities last forever. Some cities fill us with hope. Some streets carry us to some other, softer place. Some streets reach out to touch the dead. Some seasons seem to last forever. Tomorrow,

there will be a bright, cool light from somewhere other than here. Tomorrow, a light will shine down onto the city, onto the pile of bones. Tomorrow, the pools of blood will freeze in the streets and the light from the sun will shine directly in the sky above us. A mile above us seems like some other, softer, colder place. Ninety feet in the air above us, there is a tumbling. There are echoes that rush through the snowy streets until they disappear. There is hard concrete and swirling snow and a frozen river and an indescribable stillness. There are tall buildings and polished windows and concrete rooftops. There is a tunnel of wind that whips between buildings. At this very moment, the cold light from the sun touches a group of bodies on the street and there is a moment of silence. At this moment, there are cars on the highway and bodies in the apartment blocks. At another moment. In another minute. At some other, softer time, there would be a cool spring rain falling softly between the buildings at the limits of the city. At another moment, these streets would be sweltering. At another moment, there would be a cool breeze and drops of rain in the air. The city is full. The cold air hanging just above the old pile of bones in the ditch. The snow swirling around the dark centre of the city. Throughout the afternoon, there is silence. The sound of wind blowing through the city. The sound of language in the air. The sound of cars on the highway. The sound of snow swirling through the streets. Gliding above somewhere up in the cold sky, there is the scent of roses. This city is full of bodies and bones and glassy towers and broken branches and frozen rivers and dead leaves under the snow. The streets and the bodies and the cold light and the swirling snow. The sharp reflections that are visible for just a second in the polished

glass. The vibrant, snowy forest as seen through the windows of the city. There is a cold wind drifting between the buildings. There is a bright light cutting through the streets and into the city. There are broken bones and deep shadows and snow in the ditches. There is a ditch at the edge of the city that is full of old, broken bones. In the short distance between cities, there is a ditch full of snow and old, broken bones. At the limits of the city, there are piles of old bones that freeze together in the winter and the sweet smell of fruit wafting up into the air. The street stretches out horizontally like a sharp knife at the throat. Even the deepest parts of the lake have turned to ice. There is still warm water in the apartment blocks, but all the lakes have frozen over. There are stretches of asphalt and garbage and cars on the highway and snow in the ditches by the road. There are old, buried bones somewhere under the city. The street stretches out endlessly from city to city. For just a few moments, there is darkness. Every twenty-four hours or so, the lights will all flicker out at once for just a few moments. In the darkness, all bodies are easily forgotten. In the darkness, there are thousands of bodies and broken bones and soft voices and snow swirling. There is garbage blowing through the streets. There is a cold anger here at the centre of the city. There are bodies and cold light and broken flesh and grey clouds just covering the sun. There is a cold light cutting across the concrete expanse of the city. Somewhere above the light from the sun turns the clouds red and purple and orange. There are moments when cold light stretches out across the horizon and fills up the streets. There are dozens of inaudible voices coming from somewhere on the streets at the limits of the city. A dozen voices somewhere out in the streets that cannot

be heard through the sounds of the city and the swirling snow. Dozens of apartment blocks and a street that runs straight through the city. Somewhere underneath the city there are mounds of old bones and broken, decaying trees sinking into the earth. At the limits of the city, there are still a few black rocks and logs. Slow, intermingling drifts of bodies brushing up against each other. This city is full. Bodies that are ragged with scrapes and bruises and broken wings. On this flesh, scars will form on top of scars. Below this place, there is a deep hollow in the earth; above, there is a deep hollow in the sky. Above the bodies, there are streetlights in the snow. On this street—the street that intersects endlessly with other streets—there are thousands of bodies. At this very moment, a few of the bodies in the streets are staring up at the sky that is filled with low-hanging pink and orange clouds that are drifting between the concrete buildings. At this very moment, there is a hollow space below the city. At this very moment, there are thousands of bodies on the streets, thousands of bodies under the winter sun. In some parts of the city, there are thousands of bodies looking at the snow from behind polished windows. In the city, the street sometimes splits apart, connecting each apartment, each bar, each body. In the city, the streets are fractured. There are sometimes great expanses of streetlights and buildings and pathways and construction and glassy, concrete towers and freezing bodies. In between the streets and the drunken bodies, there are sometimes glittering patches of ice that reflect the light of the stars. The streets connect themselves to bodies and streetlights and bars. The streets connect themselves to other streets, other roads, other cities. Beyond the city there are hollows and ravines and rushing rivers. Beyond the city there are

deep, soft places. Beyond the city there are forests and straits and islets and streets and rocks and other cities and somewhere in the air is the scent of roses. Somewhere there is a street and another street and an unbroken sheet of pavement covering over the surface of the earth. Deep in the snowy forest—among the broken tree branches and the soft, silvery wind and the chasms and the overflowing rivers and the mounds of black earth and the icy rocks—there are countless little houses with bright lights and dozens of soft, delicate bodies. Somewhere in the snowy forest there are glimpses of roses and rocks and shrubs and mountain ranges that disappear just as suddenly as they appear. Somewhere beyond the forest is a city and another city and a street connecting them. Somewhere out there is the open, sprawling land; somewhere out there is the open, sprawling city shining with lights in the winter night. Somewhere in the air there is the taste of copper. Somewhere in the air there is the smell of garbage in the winter sun. The tunnel of silvery wind and glassy, concrete towers and the huddled, broken bodies. Somewhere out there is another city, another river, another mouth, another street, another set of streetlights. Somewhere out there is the scent of roses. Somewhere there is a street that cuts by the black rocks and the lake in the middle of the city. From the street, there is a view of the rooftops and the setting sun. There are views of concrete towers and bodies and streets from the glowing windows. There are broken branches and broken bodies and the scent of roses and a single tree and swirling snow. Some ninety feet in the air there is no danger; there are only the broken and splintered clouds and the view of the open land sprawling with cities and snow and lights and crumpled metal and drunken bodies.

Sometimes the winter cuts right through the city. Sometimes right angles cut right through the bodies in the streets. Sometimes lines run parallel to the concrete towers. Sometimes ninety feet up in the air there is just light and clouds that turn orange and pink in the setting sun. Somewhere deep in the city there is a soft, dark place. Everything here in the city can break apart and come back together again. There are no shapes here other than the glass and the buildings and the apartment blocks and a few barren trees. Below the city, there is a deep hollow in the earth. At this very moment, orange and pink clouds spread out across the sky, connecting the cities below to the open heavens and up to some other, softer place. At this very moment, there is a cool wind a mile above us in the air. At this very moment, there are cities that sprawl out across the valley and throughout the soft forest. At this very moment, there is a soft, dark place in the middle of the city. At the limits of the city, there is an overlapping space of sounds and scents and colours. At the limits of the city, there are bodies with sharp knives and deep scars. At the limits of the city, there is a pile of old bones under the snow and a patch of clear ice in the streets reflecting the orange clouds in the sunset.

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# IX

At the limits of the city, there is a pile of old bones under the snow and a patch of clear ice in the streets reflecting the orange clouds in the sunset. At the city limits, there are cool bodies and deep scars and an overlapping space of sharp objects and soft flesh. At this very moment, there is a soft, dark place at the centre of the city. The city sprawling out across the valley and throughout the soft forest and into the rainy fields. A cool wind a mile above us in the air. Dark clouds spread out across the sky, connecting the cities below to the open heavens and up to some other, softer place. Below the sprawling city, there is a deep hollow in the earth. A single street turns into a dozen streets turns into a hundred streets. Garbage rises out of the melting snow. Everything here in the city can break apart and come back together again. Eighty feet up in the air, there are parallel lines that run between the concrete towers. Sometimes right angles cut right through the bodies in the streets. Sometimes the spring cuts right through the city. Some eighty feet in the air there is no danger; there is only the broken and the splintered and the view of the open land sprawling with cities and rain and lights and crumpled metal and drunken bodies. Somewhere in the air there is the smell of garbage in the spring rain. Deep in the rainy forest—among the broken tree branches and the soft, silvery wind and the overflowing rivers and the mounds of black earth and the mossy rocks—there

are thousands of little houses with bright lights and numberless soft, delicate bodies. Somewhere there is a street and an unbroken sheet of pavement covering over the surface of the earth. Beyond the city there are forests and straits and islets and streets and rocks and other cities and somewhere in the air is the scent of roses. Beyond the city there are deep, mossy places. Beyond the city there are hollows and ravines and rushing rivers. The streets connect themselves to other streets, other roads, other cities, other sets of glowing lights. The streets connect themselves to bodies and garbage and streetlights and bars and rain falling from the sky. In between the streets and the drunken bodies, there are sometimes glittering pools of rain that reflect the streetlights glowing above. There are sometimes great expanses of streetlights and buildings and pathways and construction and glassy, concrete towers and wet, shivering bodies. In the city, the streets are fractured, splintering out into crumbling chunks of old cement. The street splits apart a thousand times, connecting each apartment, each glassy storefront, each bar, each body. In some parts of the city, there are thousands of bodies looking at the rain from behind polished windows. There are thousands of bodies with soft carpets under their feet looking out at the rain and the streetlights and the garbage swirling around the storm drains. At this very moment, there are thousands of bodies on the streets, thousands of bodies shielding their eyes from the rain. At this very moment, there is a hollow space below the city. A few of the bodies are staring up at the low-hanging pink and orange clouds. Above the bodies, there are streetlights in the rain. There are stretches of asphalt and dead bodies in the ditches. There is a deep hollow in the earth. A deep

hollow in the sky. In the city, there are streetlights and jagged scars and the taste of copper in the air. In this city, the flesh will split open again and again. On this flesh, scars will form on top of scars. In this city, the bodies are ragged with scrapes and bruises and broken fingers and torn ligaments. This city is full of neon signs and soft rain. The open air, where it drifts through the neon lights, is full of sounds and scents. Just above the city—just above the rooftops—there is an overlapping space of sounds and scents and blinding colours. In the city, there are warm, soft spaces made for bodies to curl into, spaces for entangled bodies. In the city, there are slow, intermingling drifts of bodies that brush up against each other during the day and into the night. At the city limits, there are blinding lights shining out into the darkness. Somewhere under the city there are mounds of old bones and broken, decaying trees sinking into the earth. At the city limits, there are dozens of apartment blocks and a highway that curves around the city. A dozen voices. A hundred streets. A thousand apartment blocks. Out on the streets, there is melting snow and swirling rain and bright neon lights. There are always voices coming from the streets at the city limits. From somewhere above the light from the sun turns the clouds red and purple and orange. There are bodies and neon lights and broken, cracked flesh and purple clouds in the sunset. There are tired, angry bodies at the centre of the city. There is garbage blowing through the rainy streets. In the darkness, there are thousands of bodies and broken bones and drunken voices and swirling rain in the neon lights. Every twenty-four hours or so, the lights all flicker out at the same time. For just a few moments, there is darkness again. There are stretches of asphalt and garbage and

cars on the highway and neon lights and rainwater pouring into the ditches by the road. Warm water in the apartment blocks; cool rain pouring down outside. The highway stretches out until the edges touch the furthest cities. Piles of old garbage. The sweet smell of rotting fruit. Bright, misty highway. Swirling rain. Old, broken bones in the ditches. There is a ditch that runs between the cities that is full of rainwater and old, broken bones. Bright, misty light at the edge of the highway. Blinding lights cutting through the streets, through the city. There is a tunnel of wind between the buildings. The bright, misty highway as seen through the grimy windows at the city limits. The sharp reflections in the rainwater that are visible for just a second. The streets and the bodies and the neon lights and the swirling rain. This city is full of flesh that has been cut, limbs that have been severed. This city is full. Blood swirling in the rainwater. Blood drained from a few soft, delicate bodies. This city is full of soft, delicate bodies and glassy bones and concrete towers and rivers swirling with garbage and rotting tree branches. Gliding above somewhere up in the spring sky, there is the scent of roses. There is the sound of wind cutting through the city and the sound of language in the air. There is the sound of cars on the highway and bodies moving their mouths. Throughout the night, there is a delicate silence. At some point, the rain swirls around the deep, dark centre of the city. Today, the cool air hangs just above the rainy ditch that stretches out between cities. Today, the streets are full. At another moment, there would be light from some other, warmer place. At another moment, there would be blinding light or a warm breeze or snow blowing through the streets. At some other, softer time. At some other hour. At some

other minute. At some other, softer moment. There are cars on the highway and bodies in the apartment blocks and crumpled metal in the ditches and the sound of rain outside the buildings. A cool light from the sun touches a group of bodies in the streets. There is a soft, silvery wind that drifts through the city. There are tall buildings and polished windows and concrete rooftops and blinding lights. There is hard concrete and swirling rain and garbage flowing down the river. There is a stillness here between the cities. At the outskirts, there is a view of another city. There are spring winds that rush through the rainy streets until they disappear between apartment blocks. A mile in the air above us, there is a tumbling. A mile above us seems like some other, softer, colder place. Tomorrow, the pools of blood are washed away by the rain in the streets and the light from the sun will be obscured by the clouds above us. Tomorrow, a soft light will shine down onto the city, onto the piles of wet bones. Tomorrow, there will be a bright, cool light from somewhere other than here. Some seasons seem to last forever. Some streets reach out to touch the dead. Some streets carry us to some other, softer place. Some cities fill us with hope. Some cities last forever. Somewhere up in the darkness there is the scent of roses and soft rain falling from the sky. Somewhere in the darkness above the city there is a soft, silvery wind and black clouds. Some flames flicker out in the lightest breeze. Some flames die out in the spring rain. Somewhere in the dying night. Somewhere in the streetlights and swirling rain. Somewhere there is a pile of wet bones. Somewhere there is a critical velocity in the uproar of the highway. There is the scent of rotting fruit that drifts through the street. In the city, there are piles of wet bones and heaps of garbage. The burned bodies and the

street and the gully and the soft, dark places of the apartment blocks and the expanding waters and the pools of blood and the shore and the moonlight and the black clouds and the black roots and the severed limbs and the soft, silvery wind and the rocks between the mounds of earth and the glittering stars and the open air floating over the city and the valley and the stream and concrete towers and the clear sheets of water and the branching pathways and the streetlights and all the bodies in between. The sun will be directly above us again. Branching shadows. Swirling wind. Walls erupting in flame. Rooftops collapsing under the weight of rain. Windows shattering from the heat. Floorboards crumbling into red embers. When the bodies emerge from under broken wood and broken glass and apartment blocks and the crumpled metal. The city is nothing more than bodies colliding. As the air flows up from the city limits. As the bodies intersect. As the rain swirls in the air. A warm spring wind and the colliding bodies and the low bushes by the ditch and the noise of language in the air. A river flows through the city and out past the highway. A bridge stretches between highways. There are some trees in the park swaying in the soft, silvery wind. Some language is just noise. Some flesh speaks to this particular place at this particular time. Some words fit this type of moment. The name of this city is on the tip of every tongue. The name of the city hangs in the air. Bodies fill up the air with language. Bodies cut each other with knives in the rainy streets. There are bodies weaving their way past each other. Bodies falling out of buildings. Bodies with scars. Bodies with broken toes. Warm bodies in the cold, rainy street. The wind cuts around the crooked bodies. Fire sweeps around us. Any rain swirling around towers. Any voice. Any

violence. Any sweetness. A shaft of moonlight. A multitude of shifting whites and blues. Drifting vapours. Concrete rooftops. Blinding lights. Impenetrable darkness. The hills and the gloom and the moving surfaces and the bodies and the quiet uneasiness and the wooded outlines and the soft, silvery wind and the broken branches and the soft, dark places of the city and the concrete towers and nearly all the knives in between. Some say that all the bodies have names. A concrete rooftop. A pile of trash at the limits of the city. A stream that runs through the park. A soft expanse of sky above concrete towers. Apartment block after apartment block. But which apartment in which city? On the tip of which tongue? The trees outside erupt in flames. There's a fire burning a row of apartment blocks. The bodies can be heard briefly on the other side of the park. This evening, the flesh will turn to ash. The blood will boil. A black cloud of smoke drifts above the city. The air is full of smoke. Clouds of black smoke drifting out of the windows. Fire running down the walls around us. The city bursting into flames. There is fire and neon lights illuminating the city from eighty feet up in the air. Tonight, there are breathless, drunken voices. A few stars can be seen through the black smoke. Above the concrete rooftops, the sky is black and hollow. Where are the shadows? Where are the bodies at the edge of the park? Where is this country? The river bends around the city and flows underneath certain stretches of highway. Some streets are lit up with a warm orange light, some with cascading neon. Tonight, a chill spreads through the city. From the bodies and masses of concrete and the distant western hills and the spectacle of darkness and the pure exhalations of the night and the apartment blocks and the mountains and the streets and the shaggy outlines of the tall pines

and nearly everything in between. From the broken masses of bodies. From spring. From darkness. From the bodies in the street to the rainy banks of the lake. There are straight, endless streets between apartment blocks. Between the tall buildings, there is a tunnel of wind. Rain falls into the narrow spaces between tall buildings. Rain falls onto the stacks of papers. Rain falls through the broken skylights. From the bodies in the apartment blocks to the bodies sprawled out in the garbage at the edge of the city. From the bodies in the concrete towers to the bodies in the cascading neon lights. From the soft, dark places of the park. From the tumbling in the air eighty feet above us. Below the high concrete summit is an invisible wave drifting through the city. After all the bodies disappear into the cascading neon. After all the hills and the streets and the lakes in the park and the concrete towers overlooking the trees. After all the air that has filled up body after body. After all the air passing from mouth to mouth. After all the blinding city lights. From this spot, the bodies in the city appear to find their way into the soft, dark centre. Appear to break apart in the cool light from the spring sky. Appear to interweave, to drift through each other. The sun seems to be directly above us. These bodies are a part of the city. The streets and the chasms and the rooftops and the cool waters and the shores and the horizon and the concrete towers and the disappearing trees and the crushed rocks at the side of the highway. The city disappears into another city. The old bones are forgotten in the black earth. There are bodies pressed up against the windows. Rain breaks through the skylights. White clouds spill out across the horizon. Sometimes there is bright blue light in the air. Somewhere deep under the city there is a rocky

chasm that leads down into some other, darker place. There are slow bodies in the city. If there is a sound that echoes through the streets and between the buildings and out the windows and down past the ditches and out over the stream and into the trees just past the rocks and fissures and little shrubs and tree stumps and broken bones and broken teeth. If the air floating over the street is full of voices. If there are streets full of light that run from city to city. If there is room for just one more body. If there are piles of bone being forgotten under the earth. If there is scattered light from the clouds above. If the air floats over the towers and through the city. If the flesh. If the west. If the voices in the city are just a dream. If the river evaporates. If the intermingling drifts of air stretch out above the city. All the bodies here are shining in the cascading neon lights. Somewhere in the evening light there is a cold wind that drifts through the city. At some point, the rain will subside. At some point, the bodies will stop moving. At some point, the bodies will break. At some point, the city will break too. For a moment, the pile of bones under the city is forgotten. For a moment, the moon is directly above us in the sky. For a moment, the moon is visible above the concrete rooftops and through the window. For a moment, the sound from the wind is the only thing that can be heard in the city. In the evening, there is the sound from the rushing wind that rises up through the trees and the shrubs and the broken rocks in the park. Beyond these rooftops there is a bright, shiny light and there are bodies. There is a spark on the tip of every tongue. Beyond these cities there are more bodies. Countless bodies that spill out into the streets and glide endlessly into the night. Soft voices and light and bodies and breath. Somewhere in the city

windows break. The air swells. What bodies fill the air with language? What knives cut into this flesh? What bitterness lingers in the streets? Somewhere in the city there are paintings of rocks and logs and immovable mountains and rotting chunks of driftwood and broken tree branches and clothed bodies and cold lakes and piles of bone and bright, silvery moons. If the west is right now, then the bodies must appear in the streets at midnight and the flesh must break free of the blinding neon lights. If the west is right now, it hangs in the air above this city. If the west is right now, it is drifting through these soft bodies in the streets. There are bodies that have voices that intersect with each other and cut through the spring night. For a few moments, the blinding lights of the storefronts will light up a pathway that winds though the rainy streets. Bodies disappearing into concrete towers. Bodies drifting through the rain. Somewhere beyond the city there is a clear sheet of water and glistening garbage just beneath the surface. Somewhere out there above the street there is a tumbling in the air a mile above us. Sometimes forests break apart. In the houses, there are paintings of the water in the lakes and the rivers and the streams and the waterfalls. In the apartment blocks, there are paintings of waterfalls and old towns and clothed bodies and empty streets and smoke curling above a forest. Bodies and blood and knives smashing into each other. Bodies intertwining together in the streets. In another city, there are piles of bodies. There are so many voices, so much noise. The rain swirls through the street. All the black clouds. All the bodies. All the dark mounds of wet earth. For all the right angles that run parallel to each other until there is a moment when they intersect. For all the broken rocks and

concrete towers and immovable trees and stretches of highway and deep, narrow ravines and soft, dark places. For every cheek pressed against the side of a concrete tower. Some cheeks are pressed against warm carpets in the apartment blocks. Some fingers are split open by sharp knives. Beneath the broken clouds, there are bodies down on the streets and in the parks and curled up between concrete towers. Beneath the broken clouds is a steep set of stairs leading down into the centre of the city. Blood and dirt and swirling rain. Heaps of garbage overlooking the highway. The blood disappears into the streets. There is a warm wind between the buildings in the city. The air is full of rain and the taste of rotting fruit. Each body softer and more delicate than the last. Each body gushing blood. There are bodies here that have never left the city. Bodies that only know the warm, carpeted apartment floors. Bodies that buy paintings of rivers. Above the city, there is a soft, silvery wind and an expanding, blinding light. For a moment, the city disappears in the light. For a moment, the light seems to touch everything. For a moment, nothing can be seen in the blinding light that reflects off the rainy streets and the polished windows and the glassy concrete towers. For a moment, every colour can be seen in the blinding light. For a moment, the bodies can exist anywhere. For a moment, the bodies can exist within the light and in the warm apartment blocks and on the highways and at the limits of the city and on the rainy sidewalks. There is time for light and for silence. This is a time to be swallowed whole. At this very moment, there is a soft orange glow on the horizon, lighting up the concrete towers and the streets and the city and the edge of the highway. In the morning light, the sick and broken bodies on the street are illuminated. For a

moment, the flesh is remembered. At the limits of the city, there is the ragged outline of the garbage lining the edges of the highway. There are small grey clouds in the orange sky above. The rain drifts out over the city and between the trees lining the sides of the street. Between the apartments and the broken asphalt, there are more broken bodies. If there is space here for voices, then they are quieter than before. If there is space for all these bodies, it is here in the light and in these concrete towers. If there are spaces between the cities, they are filled with a soft, swirling rain. Somewhere above there is a tumbling in the air a mile above us. Somewhere above there is a soft, silvery wind that disappears between the apartment blocks and cuts above the rainy streets. Some stars can still be seen in the morning above the rooftops and through the windows. Somewhere above there is a light from somewhere other than here. There is a bright, delicate light reflected in the brown water at the edges of the streets. In the city, there are bodies crusted over with mud and dried blood. In the rain, there are bodies heaped with rags and frayed fabric. In the sky above, there is blood and rain and concrete and blinding light. Sometimes there is no way to tell where the scent of garbage is coming from. Sometimes the wind cuts between the apartment blocks. Some forgotten old roadways beneath the highway. Some forgotten old bones beneath the city. Some light. Some bodies. Some distant place. Some grey clouds in the sky above the city. Some soft whisper from somewhere other than here. Somewhere along the street. Some mad dash between buildings. Some itchy carpets. Some foggy windows. Some dry heat. Some crooked wilderness. Some warm breath. Some overflowing ditch. Some overheated car. Some stretch of highway. Some driveway.

Some apartment. Some place from somewhere other than here. Some other, softer place. Some old, broken wood. Some other voice. Somewhere in the dark earth. Somewhere deep underneath the highways. Somewhere deep under the city. Broken bodies. Rain in the ditches. Splintered bones in the earth below the city. A grey cloud just above the rooftops. A warm wind cuts between the bodies. Rain drifts through the streets and through the city. Bodies drift from apartment to apartment. Bodies with knives. Bodies with claws. Where there are bodies, there is fire. Where there is smoke, there are bodies. There are slow, intermingling drifts of rain that disappear into the sky above the concrete towers. Just above the rooftops, there is a bright light that cuts into the city. Just above the expanse. Just above the clouds. Just between the glittering stars there is an emptiness. Just above the bodies, there are clouds of breath. Just above the rooftops, there is the scent of roses and whiskey. Just above the rooftops, there is old light from old stars piercing the morning. Just above the rooftops, there is a pink, delicate sky. Just above the rooftops, there is rain hanging in the air. Just above the city, there is a bright light that shines down on the street and out of the city. There are bodies that drift through the rainy streets. There is flesh and there are fluorescent lights from the concrete towers and there are moments when they seem to intertwine and exist together as one. At this height, the sky is just a little closer. At this height, about a quarter mile from the edge of the city. At this height, at the edge of the tower roof. If there is a tunnel of wind. If there is the taste of smoke in the air. If the bodies in the city are swallowed up. If the thousands of glittering stars above are never quite visible in the sky anymore. If the darkness is just

drifting above until the light fades away. If the bones in the ditches can't quite be seen under the heaps of garbage. If the bodies here in this city are forever. If there is a knife pressed at the throat of each body in the city. If there is the taste of copper in the air. If the street turns into another street. If there is swirling rain in the streets. If the blood sprays into the air. If there are voices. If there are trees lining the streets. If there are lines connecting the apartments to the sidewalk to the light above. If there is a city. If a line is drawn in the wet cement. If there are lines connecting the concrete towers. If there is just flesh in the city and on the streets. If the lake in the park sometimes shines in the light from the city. If there is ever truly a moment of silence again. If the bones in the forest are forgotten. If there is the taste of blood in the air. If there are moments that lead us away from the city. If rain drifts past the highways and the streets and the city. If the city is just a point in space. If the bodies are just a dream. If the bodies disappear into the light. If the broken line comes together again. If the light between buildings guides the bodies through the streets. If the city is just a series of lights. If the bodies have disappeared somewhere into all these apartments. If the bodies are entangled on the soft carpets. If the woods have disappeared somewhere under all these cities. If there are blue lights from the windows and swirling rain and black rocks in the park and warm bodies in the apartment blocks. If there are rainy streets that lead us into darkness. If there is the distant promise of summer. If there are broken bodies running through the swirling rain. If there is sickness. If there is fear. If the blood pools beneath apartment doors. If flesh is peeled from the bone beneath fluorescent lights. If slow, intermingling

drifts of rain float through the air between the buildings. If the moon is reflected in the glassy windows of the concrete towers. If there are broken bodies and hunger and warm fireplaces and windows that look out onto the cracked asphalt in the streets. If there are bodies and glassy towers in the cities. If there is a country. If there is a nation. If there is a warm wind pushing through the cracks in the concrete. If some other, softer place is not softer at all. If blood gushes from every body. If the rain never stops. If there is a tumbling in the air above us in the city. If the bodies are drained of blood. If there are endlessly expanding lights above. If there are bodies in the streets. Bodies in the darkness. Bodies seen through the swirling rain and headlights. In the spring, there are bodies within bodies in the cool night. The bones will disappear into the soft, mossy hollows. Some flesh will disappear into the earth beneath the city. Some flesh remembers the contours of the city. Some flesh carries the lingering scent of roses. Some waters disappear under the highway. Some waters seep into the heaps of garbage at the outskirts of the city. Somewhere in the swirling rain bodies are wiping the water away from their eyes. Somewhere in the city there are broken bones in the streets. There will always be long, fractured lines between the cities. There will always be broken bodies and black streets and splintered bones in the ditches. There will always be bodies with voices. There will always be words. There will always be some idea of a country. There will always be another day. There will always be a line connecting another line. Tomorrow might arrive in the next few minutes. Tomorrow blossoms in all the intertwining bodies. Tomorrow is a crooked line that cuts endlessly through the light. Tomorrow is a dream.

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